



FACT SHEET

Disaster Evacuees Attending New Schools

Audience: General public

No increased health risk

As school-age evacuees from disaster-affected areas move to new areas, members of the new community may become concerned about the potential for disease outbreak.

- School-age evacuees do not pose an increased health risk to their new classmates.
- Parents do not need to worry about diseases that are preventable by vaccines because schoolchildren are required to have up-to-date vaccinations before entering school.

Treat illnesses the same

- Children who become ill should seek medical attention as they would under normal circumstances.
- Children with fevers should not attend school. They should be examined by a physician and be treated for their illness.

Accepting evacuees into a new school

School-age evacuees will be the "new kid" in class in addition to having experienced a very traumatic event. School staff members play an important role in helping evacuees assimilate into their new environment.

Assistance efforts should be coordinated by a team of staff members at the new school. The team should assist with the following:

- Identify the child's needs and help the child feel part of the school.
- Provide offers of general assistance, such as food, clothing, and shelter, and other assistance, such as mental health services.

Teachers and administrators should be educated about strategies to integrate evacuees into their schools and about the potential signs of trauma.

For more information, see The National Association of School Psychologists web site at http://www.nasponline.org/NEAT/Katrina_relocate.pdf.

Immunization guidance

School entry requirements may not allow enrollment of children who do not have proof of immunization status. However, most schools can verify vaccination status through vaccination registries.

If a school is unable to verify vaccination status, states may opt to waive their school entry immunization requirements for school-age evacuees. Both the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials encourage states to consider waiving school entry requirements as the situation warrants.

For more information, visit www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters/,
or call CDC at 800-CDC-INFO (English and Spanish) or 888-232-6348 (TTY).